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MAX HUGEL

... denies anti-Bush intentions

GOP Urged Not to Rush '88 Decision

*Ex-CIA Man Extols
'Reagan Revolution'*

By Dale Russakoff
Washington Post Staff Writer

Former CIA deputy director Max Hugel stepped back into the political spotlight yesterday to announce that he is organizing a national grass-roots campaign to dissuade Republicans from making an early commitment to any of the 1988 presidential hopefuls.

Denying that his effort is directed against Vice President Bush, who has raised more money than any other GOP contender, Hugel said at a news conference that he aims simply to rally support for President Reagan's conservative agenda and "to see that the next president is a true soldier of the Reagan revolution."

"I'm a good friend of George Bush. I was in the CIA, he was in the CIA. In my opinion, he's an excellent vice president," Hugel said. "In no way should this be construed as a stop-anyone campaign."

Hugel, a millionaire businessman, resigned in 1981 as director of the CIA's covert operations after two former associates made allegations of improper stock-trading practices. No federal or state authorities charged him with wrongdoing.

A liaison for Reagan in 1980 with grass-roots groups, Hugel has maintained close ties with organizers of grass-roots conservatives, and his "Project 88" received warm welcomes yesterday from two of them—the National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC), which plans a similar campaign, and direct mail consultant Richard Viguerie, a vocal opponent of Bush.

Viguerie, who questions Bush's conservatism, said he discussed Project 88 with Hugel and sees it as a vehicle for keeping the nomination from Bush.

A Republican consultant said Hugel appears to be working on his own and described him as "a very wealthy man trying to find a niche for himself in the political spectrum."

Another Republican, Ron Kaufman, director of Bush's political action committee, said, "I really believe in his heart and soul that Max Hugel means exactly what he says. He doesn't want to see presidential politics interfere with the objectives of Ronald Reagan, and we're totally in synch with that."

Hugel said he expects the campaign to cost \$785,000, but declined to say where or how he would raise the money.

He said he plans to take his effort, which he has already begun in his home state of New Hampshire, to 15 major primary-election states. His ultimate goal, he said, is to build an organization that will endorse a candidate in 1988.